NASA SELECTS NES EXPERIMENTS TO FLY ON 'WEIGHTLESS WONDER'

NASA has selected the experiments developed by NASA Explorer School (NES) throughout the nation to fly aboard the agency's reduced gravity aircraft, the "Weightless Wonder," a modified McDonnell Douglas DC-9.

Twenty NES teams were selected for this unique experience, which will give teachers a feel of space as the aircraft carefully executes a series of parabolic maneuvers. To produce each parabola, the C-9 will make a steep climb followed by an equally steep dive, creating about 25 seconds of weightlessness.

The teachers and students will finish designing and building the components of their proposed project to get it flight-ready. Once complete, teachers will travel to NASA's aircraft facility at Ellington Field and the Johnson Space Center in Houston to prepare for their flight.

The teachers will be split into different groups. Selected Teams are:

Flight Week 1 – February 4-10, 2007
G.W. Carver Academy – Waco, TX
K.W. Barrett Elementary – Arlington, VA
Oak Hills Terrace Elementary – San Antonio, TX
Sioux City Community Middle School – Sioux City, IA
West Ward Elementary – Killeen, TX
Herman H. Battle Academy - Chattanooga, TN
Immokalee Middle School – Immokalee, FL
Key Peninsula Middle School – Lakebay, WA
Kilmer Elementary School – Chicago, IL
Robert L. Ford (K-8) – Lynn, MA

Flight Week 2 – February 11-17, 2007
Arrowhead Elementary – Phoenix, AZ
Conyers Middle School – Conyers, GA
Hobgood Elementary and Langston Magnet Elementary – Murfreesboro TN and Hot Springs, AR
Indian River School – Canaan, NH
Woodbury Jr-Sr High School – Woodbury, NJ
Franke Park Elementary – Fort Wayne, IN
Greenville Elementary – Greenville, IL
John Evans Middle School – Potosi, MO
Northwoods Park Middle School – Jacksonville, NC
Todd County Middle School – Mission, SD

Following their flight, the teachers will be able to share their experiences and immediate findings with their students back at the school via video conferencing technology through NASA's Digital Learning Network.

The NES program, which now has 175 teams nationwide, allows schools and their communities to work with NASA in a three-year partnership to develop the nation's future science, technology, engineering and mathematics work force. Through NES, NASA continues the Agency's tradition of investing in the Nation's education programs. The NES program is directly tied the Agency's major education goal of attracting and retaining students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM, disciplines. To compete effectively for the minds, imaginations, and career ambitions of America's young people, NASA is focused on engaging and retaining students in STEM education programs to encourage their pursuit of educational disciplines critical to NASA's future engineering, scientific and technical missions.

For more information on NASA Explorer Schools on the Internet, go to:

http://explorerschools.nasa.gov/portal/site/nes/

For more information on other NASA Reduced Gravity Programs, call Debbie Nguyen of NASA Johnson Space Center at 281-483-5111, or visit the Web at:

http://microgravityuniversity.jsc.nasa.gov